

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8351
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 JAKARTA 5366

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, ID
SUBJECT: VISIT TO EAST TIMOR, APRIL 18-21

1. SUMMARY: EMBOFF ACCOMPANIED DEFENSE ATTACHE TRIP TO EAST TIMOR APRIL 18-21 WHICH WAS CHANGED AT THE LAST MINUTE BY GOI OFFICIALS TO EMPHASIZE CIVIL ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT RATHER THAN MILITARY AFFAIRS. VISITING NUMEROUS LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE BY HELICOPTER, THE GROUP RECEIVED HIGHLY ORGANIZED BUT ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTIONS IN TRADITIONAL TIMORESE STTYLE. WHILE AREAS OF FRETELIN RESISTANCE WERE CAREFULLY SKIRTED, THE LARGE NUMBER OF REFUGEES FLEEING TO SECURE AREAS NEAR THE TOWNS IN RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT SUHARTO'S AMNESTY PROCLAMATION SUGGESTS THAT FRETELIN RETAINS LITTLE IF ANY POPULAR SUPPORT. GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FEATURE FOOD PRODUCTION, EDUCATION, HEALTH SERVICES, ROAD BUILDING AND IRRIGATION AS KEY PRIORITIES, AND INDONESIAN LANGUAGE, LAWS, AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS ARE GRADUALLY REPLACING THE INFLUENCE OF PORTUGUESE COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION. LOCAL OFFICIALS, ALMOST ALL OF THEM NATIVE TIMORESE, SEEM ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THEIR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE A LONG OVERDUE BOOST TO THE STANDARD OF LIVING
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OF THEIR PEOPLE. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF ACCOMPANIED DEFENSE ATTACHE ON VISIT TO EAST TIMOR APRIL 18-21 ARRANGED BY DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND SECURITY. ON ARRIVAL IN DILI APRIL 18 IT WAS LEARNED THAT GOI OFFICIALS HAD DECIDED AT THE LAST MINUTE TO BILL THE VISIT AS ONE BY THE "EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY AND GROUP" TO

EMPHASIZE CIVILIAN RATHER THAN MILITARY ASPECTS OF THE TRIP. THE ITINERARY ARRANGED WAS ALSO DESIGNED TO HIGHLIGHT CIVIL ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

3. THE CAPITAL CITY OF DILI WAS NEAT AND CLEAN, WITH MOST OF THE DAMAGE FROM THE 1975 FIGHTING REPAIRED AND ONLY AN OCCASIONAL BULLET HOLE STILL NOTICEABLE IN WALLS OR WINDOWS. THE BROAD STREETS AND SPACIOUS CITY CENTER HELD FEW PEOPLE, A PHENOMENON NOTED BY PREVIOUS EMBOFF VISITORS AS MUCH AS TEN YEARS AGO. SEVERAL HUNDRED FLAG-WAVING CHILDREN AND ADULTS WERE ON HAND AT THE AIRPORT, HOWEVER, TO PROVIDE AN ENTHUSIASTIC WELCOME, ALONG WITH DOZENS OF NATIVE DANCERS IN TRADITIONAL GRAB WHO PRANCED AND SHUFFLED TO THE BEAT OF DRUMS AND GONGS. BANNERS OVER THE MAIN STREET PROCLAIMED "WARM GREETINGS TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE" AND "INCREASE FRIENDSHIP WITH THE U.S." THIS SAME TYPE OF RECEPTION WAS LAID ON AT EACH OF THE STOPS ON THE TRIP, EVEN IN THE MOST REMOTE LOCATIONS.

4. VISITING PARTY AND INDONESIAN ESCORTS DEPARTED DILI APRIL 19 FOR A TWO-DAY SWING AROUND THE PROVINCE BY GOI HELICOPTER, STOPPING AT FATUMACA, OS PALOS, BAUCAU (OVERNIGHT), BOBONARO AND MALIANA. MANY OF THE FLIGHTS WERE ROUNDABOUT AND FOLLOWED AN OFFSHORE PATH TO AVOID ANY CONTACT WITH FERTILIN AREAS. THE PARTY WAS WELL GUARDED AT ALL TIMES AND CASUAL UNPLANNED STROLLS WERE CONFIDENTIAL

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POLITELY DISCOURAGED. DAILY SCHEDULES WERE FULLY PACKED FROM 0700 TO 2200. INTERPRETERS WERE PRESENT AT ALL CONVERSATIONS, AS MOST LOCAL OFFICIALS HAD ONLY JUST BEGUN TO SPEAK BAHASA INDONESIA AND WERE ACCUSTOMED TO PORTUGUESE FOR OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

5. FR. LOCCATELLI OF THE SALESINA BOYS SCHOOL AT FATUMACA, WHO SPOKE WITHOUT AID OF TRANSLATOR, COMMENTED THAT MANY OF THE PEOPLE IN THE BAUCAU DISTRICT WERE STILL IN THE HILLS WITH FRETILIN GUERRILLAS WHO WOULD SHOOT THEN IF THEY TRIED TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES. HE ESTIMATED THAT AS MANY AS 60,000 OF THE 80,000 BAUCAU INHABITANTS WERE IN THIS SITUATION. HE SAID HE WAS GETTING SOME GOI ASSISTANCE TO KEEP HIS SCHOOL FOR 160 BOYS GOING AND WAS ABLE TO CONTINUE TRAINING THEM IN WOODWORKING AND METALWORKING, BUT IT WAS MUCH MORE DIFFICULT NOW THAT FUNDS WERE NO LONGER AVAILABLE FROM EUROPEAN SOURCES. BAUCAU BUPATI ABEL DA COSTA DELO, A FORMER OFFICIAL OF THE PORTUGUESE COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION WHO WAS IMPRISONED FOR FOUR YEARS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT, ESTIMATED THAT THERE WERE 34,000 PEOPLE LIVING NEAR TOWNS IN THE DISTRICT, WITH THE REST OF THE 80,000 UP IN THE HILLS. HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WANTS

THE PEOPLE TO MOVE IN NEAR THE TOWNS SO BETTER FACILITIES
CAN BE PROVIDED, AND HE DENIED THAT FRETELIN WAS KEEPING
THEM IN THE HILLS.

6. THE BUPATI OF BOBONARO, JOAO DA SILVA TAVARES, WAS A
FORMER CHIEF OF THE AGRICULTURAL SERVICE UNDER THE PORTUGUESE.
HE HAS 30,000 REFUGEES AMONG THE 67,000 INHABITANTS OF HIS
DISTRICT, BUT CLAIMS THE LATEST GROUPS OF REFUGEES TO ARRIVE
COME FROM OTHER DISTRICTS SINCE FRETELIN HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY
ABOLISHED IN BOBONARO. LOS PALOS BUPATI CLAUDIO VIEIRA,
A NATIVE OF HIS DISTRICT, SHOWED THE PARTY A REFUGEE CAMP
FOR 600 PERSONS WHO CAME DOWN FROM THE HILLS SIX MONTHS
AGO. THE REFUGEES HAVE BEEN PROVIDED WITH SIMPLE BUT ADE-
QUATE HOUSES AT THE EDGE OF THE TOWN AND HAVE BEGUN TO WORK
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THE SURROUNDING FIELDS.

7. ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNOR AND ALL 13 BUPATIS ARE TIMORESE
CIVILIANS, THE INDONESIAN ARMY IS VERY OBVIOUSLY IN FULL
CONTROL OF EAST TIMOR. ACCORDING TO BRIG. GEN. DADING, THE
LOCAL MILITARY COMMANDER, THERE ARE NOW 155,000 REFUGEES IN
THE PROVINCE, SOME 55,000 OF WHOM HAVE COME IN FROM FRETELIN
AREAS SINCE LAST OCTOBER. THE AMNESTY ANNOUNCED BY PRESIDENT

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8352
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 JAKARTA 5366

SAHARTO IN AUGUST IS STILL IN EFFECT, HE SAID, AND FRETILIN TROOPS WITH THE RANK OF SERGEANT OR LOWER WHO SURRENDER ARE RELEASED AFTER AN INITIAL SCREENING PROCESS AND CAN GO WHEREEVER THEY LIKE. MANY OF THEM BECOME HANSIP (CIVIL MILITIA) MEMBERS. DADING NOTED THAT THE FRETILIN MEMBERS WHO SURRENDER ARE ASSIGNED TO CATEGORIES A, B, C AND X JUST LIKE G30S/PKI DETAINEES IN THE REST OF INDONESIAN THE ONLY ONES ARRESTED AND TRIED (UNDER THE INDONESIAN CRIMINAL CODE) ARE FORMER MEMBERS OF THE FRETILIN CENTRAL COMMITTEE, HE ADDED, CLASSIFIED AS CATEGORY A. REPRESENTATIVES OF EAST TIMOR BRANCH OF THE INDONESIAN RED CROSS ESTIMATED TO EMBOFF THAT THERE WERE SOME 70,000 REFUGEES CURRENTLY IN THE PROVINCE, OF WHICH 30,000 WERE STILL IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE, PARTICULARLY MILK, B-COMPLEX VITAMINS, AND CLOTHING.

8. WHATEVER THE EXACT NUMBER, THE TOTAL OF REFUGEES IS STEADILY INCREASING AT THIS POINT. GENERAL DADING SAID HE COULD ACCOUNT FOR SOME 500,000 OF THE PROVINCE' ESTIMATED POPULATION OF 600,000, BUT THE REST ARE EITHER IN FRETILIN AREAS OF HIDING ON HILLTOPS, AND MANY OF THEM MAY SUFFER FROM TH LACK OF FOOD AND SHELTER. HE NOTED CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT RECENT ARRIVALS AMONG THE REFUGEES HAD BEEN IN VERY POOR PHYSICAL CONDITION. DADING SAID HE HOPED THAT MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST FRETILIN COULD BE COMPLETED WITHIN A YEAR, WITH ANY REMAINING PROBLEMS LEFT TO REGULAR PROVINCIAL SECURTY FORCES.

9. GOVERNOR ARNALDO DOS REIS ARAUJO MENTIONED FOOD PRODUCTION, INCLUDING MEAT AND MILK, AS THE NUMBER ONE DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY FOR THE PROVINCE, FOLLOWED BY EDUCATION AND HEALTH SERVICES. WITHOUT GOOD NUTRITUION INCLUDING PROTEIN, HE EXPLAINED, THE STUDENTS CANNOT STUDY EFFECTIVELY OR REMAIN HEALTHY. AT LOS PALOS, THE GROUP WAS SHOWN A BREEDING RANCH FOR CATTLE AND BUFFALO, PART OF A GOVERNMENT PROGRAM TO REPLACE THE LIVESTOCK LOST TO FRETILIN. IN THIS FORMAL REMARKS TO THE VISITING PARTY APRIL 20, THE GOVERNOR ALSO NOTED THE NEED FOR ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND IRRIGATION PROJECTS. REIS ARAUJO POINTED OUT THAT THE 1978-79 BUDGET FOR THE PROVINCE INCLUDES RP. 6.5 BILLION FOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND ONLY RP. 2.5 BILLION FOR ROUTINE EXPENDITURES OFFICIALS IN BOBONARO WERE MOST CONCERNED OVER IRRIGATION AND FARM MACHINERY NEEDS, WHILE IN BAUCAU HOUSING, AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES WERE THE MOJOR PRIORITIES. LITERACY RATES VARY FROM 15 TO 30 PERCENT ACCORDING TO DISTRICT.

10. REIS ARAUJO SAID THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT NOW PROVIDES APPROXIMATELY \$25 MILLION ANNUALLY TO EAST TIMOR, COMPARED WITH \$5 MILLION FROM PORTUGAL DURING EACH OF THE LAST FEW YEARS OF COLONIAL STATUS. INDONESIAN LAWS ARE BEING INTRODUCED INTO THE COURTS IN STAGES, WITH THE CRIMINAL CODE ALREADY IN EFFECT AND THE CIVIL CODE STILL PENDING, AND INDONESIAN JUDGES AND PROSECUTORS HAVE BEEN BROUGHT IN FROM OTHER PROVINCES. LANGUAGE IS STILL A PROBLEM, SAID
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THE GOVERNOR, WITH 33 SEPARATE DIALECTS IN USE IN THE PROVINCE, BUT INDONESIAN IS BEING RAPIDLY INTRODUCED THROUGH SCHOOLS AND SPECIAL COURSES FOR OFFICIALS. ACCORDING TO THE GOVERNOR, 180 INDONESIAN SCHOOL TEACHERS HAVE BEEN BROUGHT IN FROM OTHER PROVINCES TO SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT POLICY OF USING BAHASA INDONESIA AS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN ALL SCHOOLS. THERE ARE 30 SCHOOLS IN THE BAUCAU DISTRICT STILL USING SOME PORTUGUESE, AND THE SAME MAY BE TRUE IN OTHER AREAS, BUT BAHASA WILL BE THE ONLY LANGUAGE USED. THE SCOUTING MOVEMENT IS EXTREMELY ACTIVE IN EAST TIMOR AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR IMBUING THE LOCAL YOUTH WITH INDONESIAN NATIONALISM. THE GOVERNMENT HAS ESTABLISHED AND STAFFED 12 HOSPITALS THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE, AS WELL AS NUMEROUS RURAL HEALTH CENTERS. TRADITIONAL LEADERS, INCLUDING LOCAL RAJAS AND CATHOLIC PRIESTS, ARE OFTEN INCLUDED IN OFFICIAL CEREMONIES AND WERE ON HAND TO GREET THE VISITING PARTY AT SEVERAL STOPS. OFFICIALS SAY THAT PRIESTS COMPLAIN ABOUT THE NEW SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT IN EAST TIMOR BECAUSE THEY ONCE ENJOYED SALARIES AND PERQUISITES AS PORTUGUESE OFFICIALS AND HAVE NOW LOST ALL OF THAT.

11. EAST TIMOR IS RECEIVING SOME ASSISTANCE FROM THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS THROUGH ITS INDONESIAN COUNTERPART, BUT PRIVATE RELIEF AGENCIES SUCH AS CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE (CRS) HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO THE PROVINCE. THE GOVERNOR SAID HE HAD RECENTLY RECEIVED A LETTER FROM CRS ASKING TO BE ALLOWED TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES, AND HAD REPLIED THAT ALL SUCH REQUESTS MUST BE DIRECTED TO JAKARTA.

12. COMMENT: IN SPITE OF THE INITIAL MIX-UP ABOUT THE COMPOSITION OF THE PARTY (ONE BANNER SUGGESTED THAT THEY MAY HAVE BEEN EXPECTING THE AMBASSADOR) THE EAST TIMOR AUTHORITIES PROVIDED A FIRST-CLASS TOUR OF THE PROVINCE AND A GOOD OVER-ALL VIEW OF RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.
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IT IS PAINFULLY OBVIOUS THAT THEY STILL HAVE A VERY LONG WAY TO GO, BUT THE ENTHUSIASM OF LOCAL OFFICIALS FOR THEIR PROJECTS SEEMS GENUINE. AS TIMORESE THEMSELVES, THEY PROUDLY POINT OUT HOW THEY ARE SURPASSING THE MEAGER DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS OF THE PORTUGUESE ADMINISTRATOR. THE THE MONUMENT, THE MILITARY PROBLEM OF REDUCING THE FRETILIN REMNANTS SEEMS TO OVERSHADOW CIVIL PROGRAMS. THERE ARE STILL SEVERAL AREAS, PARTICULARLY IN THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS, WHERE ORDINARY TRAVEL IS NOT POSSIBLE, AND THE VISIT WAS CAREFULLY ARRANGED TO GIVE SUCH AREAS A WIDE BERTH. THE CONTINUING FLOW OF REFUGEES OUT OF THESE FRETILIN AREAS IN RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDENT'S AMNESTY PROCLAMATION, HOWEVER, AND THEIR INTEGRATION INTO THE ORDINARY LIFE OF THE PROVINCE, ARE ENCOURAGING SIGNS THAT THE PROBLEM WILL EVENTUALLY RESOLVE ITSELF IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE TIMORESE PEOPLE.

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